MINUTES OF THE MEETING
OF THE COMMISSION OF FINE ARTS ON DECEMBER 20, 1961

The Commission met, pursuant to notice, at 9:00 a.m., with David E. Finley, Chairman, presiding.

Present were: David E. Finley
Felix de Weldon
William Perry
Michael Rapuano
Ralph Walker

L. R. Wilson, Secretary
Charles H. Atherton, Asst. Secretary
C.L. Martin, Counsel
Susan E. Bennett, Admin. Asst.
Gilbert Halasz, Recorder

I. SUBMISSIONS-REVIEWS-INTERVIEWS

1. District of Columbia Government

Department of Licenses and Inspections

a. Shipstead-Luce Act - Appendix 1, dated 12/19/61

The Secretary informed the members that he would send the report of proposed actions taken on Shipstead-Luce applications, forwarded by the District of Columbia Department of Licenses and Inspections since November 21, 1961.

Note: On December 27, 1961 the Secretary received the recommendations of the members of the Commission. The members confirmed the action taken in each instance of the favorable recommendations of the Shipstead-Luce Panel of Architects and of the unfavorable recommendations in the case of S.L. 2466, 488 Indiana Avenue, N.W., Parking Management, Inc. The report was dated December 18, 1961 and is EXHIBIT A.

b. Proposed Publication of Revised Shipstead-Luce Regulations

Counsel for the Commission explained to the members a proposal to revise a pamphlet, published in 1938, containing the regulations applicable to the Shipstead-Luce Act. He pointed out that many changes had taken place since 1938, such as the addition of sign regulations to the District of Columbia 1961 Building Code, and that this and other material could be added to the pamphlet.

A questionaire was distributed to each of the members for the purpose of ascertaining their opinions as to what should be included in

the pamphlet. EXHIBIT B

The members were requested to complete the questionaire and send it to the Commission's office. When the questionaires have been received the matter will be considered further.

c. Old Georgetown Act (Public Law 808, 81st Congress)

Report of Actions Taken on Applications for Permits Since 11/21/61

The Secretary informed the members that the report of the actions prepared after the recommendations of the Old Georgetown Panel of Architects, on the applications forwarded for review by the Department of Licenses and Inspections, District of Columbia, since December 11, 1961, would be forwarded to them by mail.

Note: On December 27, 1961 the Secretary received the members' recommendations. The Action taken in each instance of the favorable recommendation of the Old Georgetown Panel of Architects was confirmed, as were the unfavorable recommendations in the following cases:

| | |
|---|---|
| O.G. 3065 | 3125 M Street, N.W.<br>Captain's Table Restaurant |
| O.G. 3068 | 1721 Wisconsin Avenue, N.W.<br>Tino's Continental Restaurant |

The report was dated December 28, 1961 and is EXHIBIT C.

2. National Park Service, National Capital Parks

National Capital Parks Operations Building, Revised Design

The Commission conferred with Mr. T. Sutton Jett, Superintendent, and Mr. Charles Lessig, Chief Architect of National Capital Parks, on the revised design of the proposed Park Operations Building to be located in East Potomac Park.

Mr. Jett showed the members a rendering of the proposed building and pointed out the revisions to the design which had been made since it was considered by the Commission at the May 1961 meeting.

The members were of the opinion that the design had been improved, but that the building still lacked special distinctive qualities which reflected the activities of the National Capital Parks. They characterized the building as "industrial" in appearance. It was suggested that the architects concentrate upon improving the fenestration of the central element of the building. They also suggested that a single

material should be used throughout the entire exterior of the building, rather than limestone on the front elevation and light-color brick elsewhere as shown in the rendering.

Mr. Walker offered to meet with the architects to help them improve the design further. Mr. Jett accepted Mr. Walker's offer and will arrange a mutually agreeable meeting date.

The Secretary was directed to prepare a letter for the Chairman's signature setting forth the Commission's recommendations. EXHIBIT D.

3. National Capital Planning Commission

The Georgetown Waterfront Development Proposal

Mr. William Finley, Director of the National Capital Planning Commission, met with the Commission to explain a staff proposal for the redevelopment of the Georgetown Waterfront area. Mrs. James C. Rowe, Chairman of the Planning Commission and Mrs. Alan James, Acting President of the Progressive Citizen's Association of Georgetown also attended the meeting.

Mr. Finley began by explaining that the area under discussion is bounded by M Street on the north, Rock Creek on the east, and by Key Bridge on the west. He pointed out that the citizens' associations of Georgetown had requested the Planning Commission to initiate studies as to how to improve conditions in this area.

The studies were begun by establishing the location of buildings of architectural and historic merit. A study map of the area showing the location of these buildings was shown to the members.

Next the Planning Commission employed a consulting firm to analyze the industrial and commercial activities in the area. The consultant's conclusion was that the area has no industrial future.

As a result of the Planning Commission's staff studies recommendations were made that a waterfront park be established from the river north to "K" Street; that M Street be made a boulevard by narrowing the street way, planting trees, etc.; that buildings which are out of scale or otherwise inappropriate be replaced with buildings of the proper size and character. The major conclusion was that the area, except for M Street, should be predominately residential.

Mr. Finley then discussed alternate means to achieve these goals, i.e. either by rezoning the entire area as residential and thus removing the industrial development by attrition, or by a process of "selective"

urban renewal. He indicated that the staff of the Planning Commission preferred the urban renewal approach.

There was a general discussion of how urban renewal would operate in the area. Mr. Finley pointed out that the "bulldozer" approach to urban renewal such as was used in Southwest Washington would not be appropriate in Georgetown. He explained that by "selective" urban renewal only those buildings and land usage which are inappropriate to historic Georgetown would be removed and buildings of historic or architectural merit would be excluded from the project.

Mrs. Rowe explained that the staff proposal had been presented to the Planning Commission at its November meeting and that the Commission had authorized the staff to continue studies of the problem. She also pointed out that because there had been no community acceptance in Georgetown of the urban renewal approach the Commission had decided not to endorse the principle of urban renewal until more facts were available.

The Chairman expressed some doubt as to the desirability of including M Street in the project. He pointed out that the opinions of the Georgetown Citizens' Associations should be respected. Mrs. James was asked if she wished to say anything.

Mrs. James replied that she believed M Street had reached the stage where redevelopment was progressing satisfactorily without urban renewal and that to apply urban renewal now would upset the natural development of the area. She also stated that another objection was the lack of any legal method of holding the renewal agency to its promises. Mrs. James concluded that zoning changes would materially assist in the rehabilitation of the area without the need of urban renewal.

The members thanked Mr. Finley for his presentation and expressed their interest in seeing the results of further studies which the staff of the Planning Commission will make. No action was taken. EXHIBIT E

4. Proposed Pan American Health Organization Headquarters Building, Virginia Avenue, 22d and 23d Streets, N.W.

The Commission met with Dr. Stuart Portner, Chief of Administration, Mr. Earl Brooks, Chief of Administration, Management and Personnel, Pan American Health Organization, and Mr. Roman Fresnedo Siri, Architect, to discuss Mr. Siri's design for the building.

Dr. Portner opened the discussion by explaining the nature of the Pan American Health Organization and its relationship to the Pan American Union and the World Health Organization of the United Nations. He explained the desire of the Health Organization to establish a permanent headquarters building in Washington and that the United States government had donated a

site for such a building bounded by 22d Street, 23d Street, Virginia Avenue and E Street, N.W. Dr. Portner stated that an international competition to secure a design for the building had been held and that the winning architect, Senor Fresnedo Siri of Uruguay was present to explain his design.

Senor Siri, using renderings and a scale model, explained the features of his proposed scheme. The design consisted of an eleven story office building, 110 feet in height and a semi-detached circular three-story auditorium building. The larger building was cresent-shaped and construction materials were granite, glass and vertical louvers in aluminum. The elevations of the auditorium building were treated with a bronze patterned grill. Mr. Siri explained that he had attempted to coordinate his design with the proposed Columbia Plaza which is to be located immediately to the south.

The members had no objections to the massing, and general features of the design, but there was a general discussion of the disadvantages inherent in using aluminum and bronze for the grill-work on the auditorium. It was pointed out that experience had shown these materials are most difficult to keep clean in this climate, and if not cleansed frequently were unattractive in appearance. For this reason, it was suggested that the architect considered the use of a non-metallic material for the grill-work such as ceramic or architectural concrete.

The members admired the simplicity and unity of the design, but felt that it perhaps had been stressed to an excessive degree. They suggested that the architect make studies in which some of the more important elements of the program might be given individual emphasis, thus enriching the rather limited interest in the design.

The Chairman invited Dr. Portner and Senor Siri to return again with the results of the architect's studies based upon the Commission's recommendations.

The Secretary was directed to prepare a letter for the Chairman's signature setting forth the Commission's recommendations. EXHIBIT F

5. Resolution on Removal of Temporary Buildings

The Chairman asked Mr. Perry to read the draft resolution on the removal of temporary office buildings occupying parkland on the Mall. A vote was taken and the resolution was approved as drafted. Copies of the motion were distributed to the members of the Press in attendance.

Thereafter, at 11:30 a.m., the meeting was adjourned.

Respectfully submitted,

C. L. Martin

C. L. Martin, Counsel

MEETING OF THE COMMISSION OF FINE ARTS
20 December 1961

ORDER OF BUSINESS

AM

9:30 1. CONVENE, ROOM 7000, INTERIOR DEPARTMENT BUILDING

2. SUBMISSIONS-REVIEWS-INTERVIEWS

9:35 a. National Capital Planning Commission

The Georgetown Waterfront Development Proposal
(Mr. William Finley, Director, NCPC; Miss Mary Small, Special Assistant for Community Relations, NCPC)

10:15 b. Proposed Pan American Health Organization Headquarters Building Square 59, Virginia Avenue, 22d and 23d Sts., N.W.
(Doctor Stuart Portner, Chief, Administration, Pan American Health Organization; Mr. Earl Brooks, Chief, Administration Management and Personnel, Pan American Health Organization; Mr. Roman Fresnedo Sira, architect)

c. Temporary Buildings, Resolution on the Removal

REPORT OF ACTIONS TAKEN ON SHIPSTEAD-LUCE ACT APPLICATIONS SINCE 11/21/61

DEC 28 1961

| NO | ADDRESS AND OWNER | PROJECT |
|---|---|---|
| 2463 | 106-08 Indiana Ave., NW<br>Nat'l. Assn. of Letter Carriers | 8-story addn. to exist. bldg. |
| ACTION: | App'd., 12/14/61. | |
| 2464 | 211-13 Penna. Ave., SE<br>(Store) Ralph Given, et al | Remove projecting showwindows & cornice, rearrange entr., & install new doors & plate glass. Install new red roman brick on front of 1st story. |
| ACTION: | App'd., provided white metal fascia be replaced with brick to match adjoining brick, 12/20/61. | |
| 2465 | 300 Penna. Ave., SE<br>American Savings & Loan Assn. | 3'-6" fence, brick & chain link. |
| ACTION: | App'd; request sample of face brick be submitted for review, 12/14/61. | |
| 2466 | 488 Indiana Ave., NW<br>Parking Management, Inc. (Parking Lot) | Change text on 4 exist. signs. Single-faced, 24 sq-ft each. Black ltrs., white bckgd. |
| ACTION: | Disapproved. Sign text should be limited to identification of business only. Square-footage of existing signs exceeds maximum allowed. Suggest placing smaller fee signs at more appropriate location, such as attendant's shed, 12/14/61. | |
| 2467 | 2727 Adams Mill Rd., NW<br>Thos. H. Ryon Co. (Apt. Bldg.) | Rev. to SL 2443. Construct 3-story brick & cinder-block apt. |
| ACTION: | App'd. Suggest entr. lobby be enlarged on right side, front elevation, so as to center glass wall area directly under central bay, 12/20/61. | |

Exhibit A

# SHIPSTEAD-LUCE ACT INFORMATION PAMPHLET

In 1938 a pamphlet entitled "The Shipstead-Luce Act - Rules and Regulations Administered by the National Commission of Fine Arts, Washington, D. C." was prepared by the Commission of Fine Arts and printed by the Government Printing Office. One thousand copies were printed at a cost of $126.00. Of the original one thousand copies, approximately 230 copies are now available from the Commission.

The pamphlet consisted of 17 pages and included introductory remarks, the text of the Act, regulations, excerpts from the Schedule of Heights of Buildings adopted by the Board of Commissioners, suggestions for the guidance of architects, 8 photographs of private and public buildings, 2 renderings and a copy of a map of the area covered by the Shipstead-Luce Act.

This pamphlet appears to have been prepared entirely by the Secretary of the Commission of Fine Arts and the text was approved by the Commission on December 16, 1937. It was informally approved by a representative of the District Commissioners on the same day.

There is no information bulletin available to the public on the Shipstead-Luce Act, i.e., what it covers, procedures, regulations, etc., other than this pamphlet. Copies of the 1938 pamphlet are kept in the Commission's offices, but not in the Permit Branch of the District Department of Licenses and Inspections.

Governmental agencies are frequently criticised by both the general public and the judiciary for their failure to make readily available information about subjects covered by various acts of Congress and the

EXHIBIT B

applicable rules and regulations. Such complaints have been voiced recently by persons required to procure buildingspermits under the Shipstead-Luce Act.

In the opinion of some the twenty-three year old existing pamphlet is now obsolete. It does not contain such facts as the sign regulations recently incorporated in the 1961 Building Code of the District of Columbia and other information as to the procedures to be followed. Moreover, its official status is not clearly established.

In order to assist in determining if a new pamphlet is necessary, and, if so, what such a pamphlet might contain, will you please answer the following questions:

1. Do you believe a new information pamphlet is desirable?

   Ans._____

2. Assuming an affirmative answer to Question No. 1, should such a pamphlet be issued by the Commission of Fine Arts, the District of Columbia Government, or jointly?

   Ans._____

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3. Should the pamphlet contain only the text of the Shipstead-Luce Act, 1961 Building Code provision, information on procedures, map of the Shipstead-Luce Act Area, or might it also include some mention of such things as color and texture of materials, design standards of sidewalk cafes, awnings, marquees, signs, etc?

   Ans._____

_____

_____

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4. Should the pamphlet mention and/or emphasize preliminary submissions, or should nothing be said about them?

Ans._____

5. Should a specific policy of review of adverse recommendations be established and set forth in the pamphlet, or do you believe the existing method of reviewing adverse decisions is adequate?

Ans._____

6. The 1961 Building Code provided that variances from the sign regulations may be granted by the District Commissioners with approval of the Commission of Fine Arts. Do you believe a special procedure should be adopted for consideration of requests for variances and set forth in the pamphlet, or should nothing be said about this provision?

Ans._____

7. Do you believe a similar pamphlet concerning the Old Georgetown Act would be desirable?

Ans._____

General Comments:_____

REPORT OF ACTIONS TAKEN ON OLD GEORGETOWN ACT APPLICATIONS SINCE 11/21/61 DEC 5 1961

| NO | ADDRESS AND OWNER | PROJECT |
|---|---|---|
| 3055 | 3239 M St., NW<br>Potomac Restaurant | 2 awnings, black & white striped canvas. 1 over entr. & 1 over showwindows. Suspended from bldg. Fixed iron frames. |

ACTION: Not recom'd; suggest substitution of a single shed-type awning, or a split awning giving the appearance of a single awning, shed-type design, 11/28/61.

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| 3056 | 1520-33rd St., NW<br>Mrs James Denby | Install copper clad marquise over front entrance. To project 22" beyond bldg. line. |

ACTION: Recom'd. provided drip moulding is extended ½" over fascia, & total thickness of fascia is increased by enlarging lowest part approx. 1½". Also, provide wooden ceiling panel to cover any structural metal parts, 11/28/61.

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| 3058 | 1665 Wisc. Ave., NW<br>Martha Low Channell (Little Louvre Art Gallery) | 1 s-f sign. 4.4 sq-ft. Wood. Black ltrs. on beige bckgd. |

ACTION: Ret'd. for more inf., showing detail of constr. of sign, style of ltring, shape of sign, & its location on, & attachment to the bldg., 11/28/61.

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| 3060 | 2913 M St., NW<br>Rue Royale Restaurant | Floodlight front of bldg. Hang light fixture. |

ACTION: No objection to floodlighting which, it is noted, is already in place; recom. omitting decorative lighting fixture at doorway, which is out of scale with other arch'l. details, 11/28/61.

Exhibit C

REPORT OF ACTIONS TAKEN ON OLD GEORGETOWN ACT APPLICATIONS SINCE 12/5/61

DEC 11 1961

| NO | ADDRESS AND OWNER | PROJECT |
|---|---|---|
| 3061 | 1242 Potomac St., NW<br>Winifred M. Jacobson | Close exist. porch, 1st fl. rear of house; convert exist. garage to piano practice studio; remodel kitchen. |
| ACTION: | Recom'd., 12/5/61. | |
| 3062 | 3220 Prospect Ave., NW<br>L. B. Doggett (Parking lot) | 1 s-f, 24 sq-ft sign, with back-lighted opaque metal ltrs. Black painted ltrs., white bckgd. |
| ACTION: | Recom'd., provided sign is located so that no part overhangs public space, 12/5/61. | |
| 3063 | 3263 M St., NW<br>Jim's Carry Out Restaurant | Rev. to OG 3040. Remodel front. |
| ACTION: | Ret'd. Recom. revising according to attached sketch, 12/5/61. | |
| 3064 | 1411-29th St., NW<br>Ernest B. Dane, III | Rev. to OG 3046. Remodel exist. 2-story frame dwelling, restoring front. |
| ACTION: | Recom'd. for parts visible from a public highway, 12/5/61. | |

REPORT OF ACTIONS TAKEN ON OLD GEORGETOWN ACT APPLICATIONS SINCE 12/11/61

DEC 28 1961

| NO | ADDRESS AND OWNER | PROJECT |
|---|---|---|
| 3065 | 3125 M St., NW<br>Captain's Table Restaurant | Floodlighting to illuminate sign. |

ACTION: Not recom'd. The proposed method of illumination, (which, it is noted, is already in place), might prove satisfactory for the floodlighting of certain architectural features, but it is unsuitable for its intended purpose of backlighting a sign. It is recom'd. that a fixture producing a more diffuse lighting be substituted for the spotlights, thus eliminating the uneven quality of light and shadows which presently detracts from the legibility of the sign. Lighting sources should not be exposed to view, 12/20/61.

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| 3067 | 3263 M St., NW<br>Jim's Carry Out Restaurant | Rev. to OG 3063. Replace present showwindows with new. |

ACTION: Recom'd., provided that a segmental arch is placed at the head of the opening in lieu of a flat lintel, 12/20/61.

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| 3068 | 1721 Wisc. Ave., NW<br>Tino's Continental Restaurant | 1 canvas awning over entr. Suspended from bldg. Fixed iron frames. Canvas—white-primrose. |

ACTION: Not recom'd. There is no objection to the type of awning in the proposed location, but it is recom'd. that the form and dimensions of the awning be given further study with a view toward achieving a lighter overall effect. It is suggested that the top of the canopy slope down in a flat plane toward the front, thus presenting a thinner edge on the front elevation, 12/20/61.

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| 3069 | 1411-34th St., NW<br>Mr & Mrs David Bruce | Install wooden garden gate. |

ACTION: Recom'd., 12/20/61.

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| 3070 | 3271 P St., NW<br>Mr & Mrs John D. Walker | 1-story addn. on rear of exist. dwelling. |

ACTION: Recom'd. for parts visible from public highway, 12/18/61.

23 December 1961

Dear Mr. Wirth:

The Commission of Fine Arts, at its meeting on December 21th, conferred with Mr. T. Sutton Jett, the Director of National Capital Parks, on further developments of the design for the National Capital Parks Operations Building, which is to be located in East Potomac Park, adjacent to Buckeye Drive and Ohio Drive.

Mr. Jett reviewed the background of the current design, which he explained in detail, covering the various aspects of the site plan and the massing of the buildings. Following the presentation by Mr. Jett, the members of the Commission discussed the architectural character of the design which, in their opinion, raised some question as to its appropriateness as a Federal building and as a structure representative of the Park Service. They believed, however, that it was largely a matter involving fenestration and the use of materials. To this end they proposed that the architect meet with a member of the Commission, Mr. Ralph Walker, and work out a final solution.

Mr. Jett indicated he was agreeable to this arrangement. It was, therefore, decided that the architect would meet at some time in the near future with Mr. Ralph Walker in his office in New York City. If you will advise this office, an hour can be arranged that is mutually convenient.

For the Commission of Fine Arts:

Sincerely yours,

David E. Finley
Chairman

Mr. Conrad Wirth
Director
National Park Service
Department of the Interior
Washington 25, D.C.

EXHIBIT D

EXHIBIT D

3 January 1962

Dear Mrs. Rowe:

The Commission of Fine Arts, at its meeting on December 20th, discussed with Mr. William Finley, Director of the National Capital Planning Commission, the proposals outlined in the staff report on the development of the Georgetown waterfront area.

The members of the Commission have long been concerned with the condition of the waterfront and hope that this area can be made a park, joining the present park areas from the vicinity of 36th Street to Rock Creek. They would also be glad to see the area south of M Street developed for residential use. The members were interested to know that your staff will continue to study this area but would not like to express an opinion on the redevelopment of M Street until they have had an opportunity to confer with our Board of Architectural Consultants for Georgetown, and also the Georgetown organizations.

The Commission of Fine Arts, as you know, has a special responsibility under the Old Georgetown Act to preserve the historic value of the Georgetown district and feels that development by private individuals of property north of M Street has been excellent.

For the Commission of Fine Arts:

Sincerely yours,

David E. Finley
Chairman

Mrs. James H. Rowe
Chairman
National Capital Planning Commission
Washington 25, D. C.

EXHIBIT E

EXHIBIT E

9 January 1962

Dear Mr. Horwitz:

The Commission of Fine Arts, at its meeting on December 20th, conferred with Dr. Stuart Portner, representing the Pan American Health Organization, and Mr. Roman Fresnedo Siri, architect, regarding the design that was selected by competition for the proposed Headquarters Building of the Pan American Health Organization, to be located on a triangular plot of ground between Virginia Avenue, E Street and 23d Street, N.W., adjacent to the State Department Building.

Dr. Portner explained the background of the international competition which had led to the selection of Mr. Fresnedo Siri as project architect, and introduced Mr. Fresnedo Siri, who then presented rendered perspective drawings and plans of his design.

The members of the Commission were generally in favor of the basic approach to the design. They agreed that, in spite of the restrictions of the site, the architect had succeeded in arranging his building masses so that the building would be suitably related to the buildings of the State Department and the proposed Columbia Plaza Development. The members stressed the importance of extending the harmony of this relationship to the materials of adjoining buildings as well. They had some reservations about the use of aluminum and bronze elements on the facades; particularly for the exterior of the circular auditorium, where it was felt that masonry would be a more satisfactory material for the surrounding screen.

There was some discussion on the general character of the exterior treatment, again in regard to the auditorium, and its relation to the office tower. The members of the Commission would like to see additional studies made in which individual elements would be accented and an attempt made to incorporate more interest into what some of the members thought to be too great a uniformity.

The Commission was glad to see the design of the building at such an

EXHIBIT F

EXHIBIT F

early stage, and hopes that the discussion with the members will be helpful to the architect in further developing the project. In this respect they will be glad to meet with Sr. Fresnedo Siri again and to review the work as it progresses.

For the Commission of Fine Arts:

Sincerely yours,

David E. Finley
Chairman

Mr. Abraham Horwitz
Director
Pan American Health Organization
1501 New Hampshire Avenue, N.W.
Washington 6, D.C.

early stage, and hope that the discussion with the members will be helpful to the architect in further developing the project. In this respect they will be glad to meet with Mr. Fresnedo Siri again and to review the work as it progresses.

For the Commission of Fine Arts:

Sincerely yours,

David E. Finley
Chairman

Mrs. Abraham Horwitz
Director
Pan American Health Organization
1501 New Hampshire Avenue, N.W.
Washington 6, D.C.